

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 IO-14 ACDA-19 OMB-01 SAM-01 SAJ-01 DRC-01

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TO AMEMBASSY BONN

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4009

CINCEUR FOR POLAD & OPS

CINCUSAREUR FOR POLAD OPS & AEAGC-OCO

USELMLO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 1640

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, MOPS, WB, US

SUBJECT: US ARMY PROJECT "WHEELS" PROGRAM

1. DEPARTMENT OF ARMY IS CURRENTLY CONDUCTING WORLD-WIDE PROGRAM OF REDUCING NUMBER OF TACTICAL WHEELED VEHICLES, PARTICULARLY THOSE ORGANIC TO TACTICAL UNITS. OVERALL GOAL OF THIS PROGRAM IS 25 PERCENT REDUCTION IN SUCH VEHICLES, AND IMPLEMENTING PLAN NOW PROPOSED WOULD ELIMINATE 32 PERCENT OF THE WHEELED VEHICLES ASSIGNED TO THE INFANTRY BATTALIONS OF BERLIN BRIGADE.

2. WE ARE SERIOUSLY CONCERNED WITH IMPACT THAT REDUCTION OF THIS MAGNITUDE WOULD HAVE ON BRIGADE'S ABILITY TO CARRY OUT ITS MISSIONS, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO AUTOBAHN OPERATIONS. WHEN BERLIN-BASED INFANTRY BATTALIONS MOVE TO AND FROM THEIR MAIN TRAINING AREAS IN WEST GERMANY, MAIN BODY OF UNIT NORMALLY TRAVERSES AUTOBAGN ON ONE DAY IN ORDER TO PRESERVE PRECEDENT FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR RAPID ROAD REINFORCEMENT OF GARRISON BY ONE BATTALION. WERE CUTS PROPOSED BY
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USAREUR TO BE IMPLEMENTED, BATTALIONS WOULD NOT HAVVE

SUFFICIENT LIFT TO MAINTAIN THIS PRECEDENT. ADDITIONALLY, MOUNTING OF WEEKLY ADMINISTRATIVE CONVOYS WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT IN WAKE OF A 32 PERCENT REDUCTION.

3. BERLIN BRIGADE COULD NOT OFFSET PROPOSED REDUCTION WITH THE FEW DM-PROCURED VEHICLES AVAILABLE IN BERLIN. THESE FEW VEHICLES CANNOT BE USED FOR AUTOBAHN CONVOYS UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF USAREUR REGULATIONS 550-180. THIS REGULATION WAS WRITTEN FOR POLITICAL PURPOSE OF INSURING CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION OF LONG ESTABLISHED AUTOBAHN PRECEDENT, VIS-A-VIS SOVIETS, OF LIMITED CONVOYS TO TACTICAL VEHICLES. INTRODUCTION OF COMMERCIAL VEHICLES INTO TACTICAL CONVOYS COULD LEAD TO SOVIET PROTESTS AT TIME WHEN SUCH PROTESTS ARE NOT IN OUR INTEREST.

4. LARGE REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF WHEELED VEHICLES ORGANIC TO BERLIN BRIGADE WOULD ALSO AFFECT ABILITY OF BRIGADE TO DEPLOY RAPIDLY WITHIN CITY IN CIVIL DISTURBANCE OR MILITARY CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS. THIS PROBLEM PARTICULARLY ACUTE SINCE, AS RESULT OF USAREUR DIRECTIVE OF LAST YEAR TO MOVE AMMUNITION STORAGE SITE FROM MCNAIR BARRACKS TO DEPOT IN GRUNEWALD, UNITS ARE NOW STATIONED CLOSER TO POTENTIAL ENEMY THAN THEIR BASIC LOA. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, SHUTTLE OF VEHICLES TO PICK UP AMMUNITION AND DEPLOY TROOPS IS SIMPLY NOT FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVE. UNLIKE BRIGADES ASSIGNED TO DIVISIONS IN FRG, ISOLATED BERLIN BRIGADE CANNOT CALL UPON DIVISIONAL AND CORPS TRANSPORTATION UNITS FOR ASSISTANCE, AND ITS BATTALIONS HAVE FEWER ORGANIC TRACKED APCs FOR TROOP LIFT THAN FULLY MECHANIZED UNITS IN FRG.

5. BERLIN BRIGADE HAS SUBMITTED ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL TO USAREUR WHICH WOULD PROVIDE FOR 12 PERCENT REDUCTION IN WHEELED VEHICLES ASSIGNED TO ITS INFANTRY BATTALIONS: WE BELIEVE THAT REDUCTION OF THIS SCOPE WOULD BE IN SPIRIT OF "WHEELS" PROGRAM WHILE AT SAME TIME PERMITTING BRIGADE TO CONTINUE TO MEET ITS MISSION REQUIREMENTS.

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6. USCOB CONCURS.KLEIN

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